

The True Power of Parenting

FREE Magazine for 'The I AM Program' Subscribers



**Swirling
Vibrating
Words**

**Musical
Intelligence**

SCHOOL
One Size Fits All

**First Days
at School**

**I Tell
My Girls
'I AM
Beautiful'**





Letter from the Editor

Educating Our Children

Hello Everyone,

Here we are with the second issue of The True Power Of Parenting Magazine.

Firstly I feel blessed to welcome all of our new subscribers and friends, it is encouraging to know that so many people are on the wavelength of love, kindness and emotional intelligence.

A lot has happened in the past few months and serendipitously it has all brought me into a deeper awareness of the need for emotional intelligence education in our classrooms.

The most exciting news is that a local school has become enthusiastic about implementing emotional intelligence in active and substantial ways into their mainstream curriculum!

Being quite unusual for a government funded school in Australia this is a great milestone for the future of students, The I AM Program's emotional intelligence efforts and the potential for positive change.

The reason Stokers Siding Primary School saw fit to make these changes was the significant reduction

in bullying they had observed since making values, FUN and conscious connection a part of their daily interactions with the students.

I am so proud to be able to participate in these changes and truly believe we will be seeing a wave of consciousness that mirrors this little schools courageous action.

Enjoy your magazine friends, it has been fun and informative for me to collect the content and I am grateful for all the help I've had in delivering it to you.

Remember if you would like to contribute in anyway with stories or feedback,

please send your letter to

arna@theiamprogram.com

Choosing Peace

Arna Baartz, Editor

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”

Nelson Mandela

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Teaching Self- Awareness to Kids

There are many
different ways
to develop
self-awareness,
my all time
favourite is
feelings awareness



Feelings awareness is about helping children connect the thoughts they are having to a feeling the thought is generating in their body.

For example, I asked my teenaged daughter to listen to me speak then tell me how she felt in her body as she listened.

I chose to repeat something I had recently heard a young mother say, “The world is terrible, education sucks, the kids all hate school and teachers are no

good, there’s not much hope ‘cause we’re all stuck in a negative mindset”.

THEN I asked her to listen to another sentence, “The world is wonderful, teachers are waking up, education is changing and things are getting better, kids are beautiful and we’re all looking at a bright and sustainable future”.

My daughter’s response was that the first sentence felt bad, made her chest feel heavy, like she couldn’t be bothered moving. HOWEVER the second sentence made her feel happy and full of life, it made her want to move!

If something feels heavy we are not in a good place to affect positive change, whereas if something makes us feel light and happy we have more energy to address the issues at hand.

Helping children become aware of their responses develops an aspect of emotional-intelligence, essential for appropriate choice making and for living their best lives!

**Children
are our
future leaders,
let us teach them well!**

*Arna Baartz
is the founder and director
of The I AM Program,
the editor of The True Power
of Parenting Magazine
and mother to
eight beautiful children.*

To learn more about
Arna and her work please visit
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Being Beautiful



By Amanda King

I've started telling my girls that I think I'm beautiful

It's been so easy to tell them how beautiful THEY are, because it's obvious. They are the thing beauty is made of. They are the reason we started worshipping beauty. They are milky and porcelain with eyes that see right through you. They sparkle and dance. When they're sleeping, they turn into soft cloud babies, little perfect tufts of white on the moonlight.

There are a lot of people like me. Women who know things. Women who have seen things. Women with diseases in their livers. There are a lot of women with scars on their arms and words that carry themselves like sparrows. There are women who were too big for this town, who had their backs bent carrying things like religion and a history that originated somewhere in the crook of a branch that extended over a stream. A place where a patch of the sky was visible through the leaves, where a little girl let her bare leg dangle too far down.

There are a lot of people like me, because we're all the same. We're all blood and electricity. We're lonely under the gaze of God. We're all wet with dew and swallowing hard against DO THIS, CONSUME, SHUT UP and BE AFRAID to die.

All of you women with lines on your brow, with cracks between your fingers, it's been a long winter. All of you...you are beautiful and so am I.

The thing is, my children are perfect. I am the grown up, so I'm supposed to show them everything about life. When they wake up in the morning, though, I stare at them and they're new. They teach me everything. They are babies and they teach me what it means to be a person. It's easy to see that they're beautiful.

I am slow and I am tired. I am round and sagging. I am harried. I am sexless. I am getting older.

I am beautiful. How can this be? How can any of this be true?

I don't want my girls to be children who are perfect and then, when they start to feel like women, they remember how I thought of myself as ugly and so they will be ugly too. They will get older and their breasts will lose their shape and they will hate their bodies, because that's what women do. That's what mommy did. I want them to become women who remember me modeling impossible beauty. Modeling beauty in the face of a mean world, a scary world, a world where we don't know what to make of ourselves.





“Look at me, girls!”

I say to them.

***“Look at how beautiful I am.
I feel really beautiful, today.”***

I see it behind their eyes, the calculating and impression, how glad they are that I believe I am beautiful. They love me. To them, I am love and guidance and warm, soft blankets and early mornings. They have never doubted how wonderful I am. They have never doubted my beauty. How confusing it must have been for them to see me furrowing my brow in the mirror, sucking in my stomach and sighing.

How confusing it must have been to have me say to them, “You think I am beautiful, but you are wrong.



You are small and you love me, so you’re not smart enough to know how unattractive I am. I know I am ugly because I see myself with mean eyes. You are my child and I love you, but I will not allow myself to be pretty, for you. No matter how shining you are when you watch me brushing my hair and pulling my dress over my head. No matter how much you want to be just like me, I can’t be beautiful for you and I don’t know why.”

**I am beautiful
I am beautiful
I am beautiful**

It’s even been working, a little bit. I’ve even stopped hating myself, a little bit.

I’ll be what they see. They see me through eyes of love. I’d do anything for them, even this.

I am beautiful.

Amanda King is a Pittsburgh mommy of two beautiful, Super Girls. She is married to the world’s sexiest accountant and they’re all sure to live happily ever after.

While not frantically writing stories and searching for the perfect literary agent, she can be found over-sharing on her blog at Last Mom On Earth.

Follow her on Twitter at
[@LastMomOnEarth](https://twitter.com/LastMomOnEarth)



***I am beautiful. How can this be?
How can any of this be true?***

virtues

by Monica Batiste

Generosity

When you are generous, you give freely and from the heart. Generosity is a gift. Your gift could be an act of service, helping somebody, or giving something that is needed.

Friends often give freely to each other; they give love, support or help and don't expect anything in return.

You can also be generous to yourself. You can give yourself kindness, appreciation and help yourself when you need it.

When you are generous, you make other people feel good. When you are generous, your own spirit feels happy.

Give what you can, and make the world a better place.

Generosity box to put wishes or gifts in for self and others.



Making a box with your children

For a ready-made box, start at number 9.

1. Start with a square piece of paper of any size (you may colour in the paper first if you wish).
2. Draw diagonal lines from corner to corner to find the centre of the paper.
3. Fold each corner into the centre.
4. Fold each edge halfway into the centre.
5. Unfold the piece of paper and cut the first fold from the corner to the edge of the base (do not cut into the base of your box).
6. You should have four cut folds.
7. From one corner, fold the edge then fold the edge again. (*The base is still flat*)
8. Lift the edge to make the side of the box, fold the cut corners inside the box for the next side to fold over. Do this to each side.
9. **Voilà!** You have a box. You can paint or decorate this box with wrapping paper or cutouts.
10. Encourage the children to use pictures to help them visualize what they wish for themselves or another. It could be a heart to symbolize love, or a garden for happiness, or a gift for themselves or others.
11. Place the gift or wish inside the generosity box for the person to receive.



Generosity box

Gift ideas

1. Make a paper heart and write something you would like to do for someone (*an act of kindness, a helping hand*) and then give it to them.



2. Make a toy for another child.
3. Draw a picture for mum or dad.

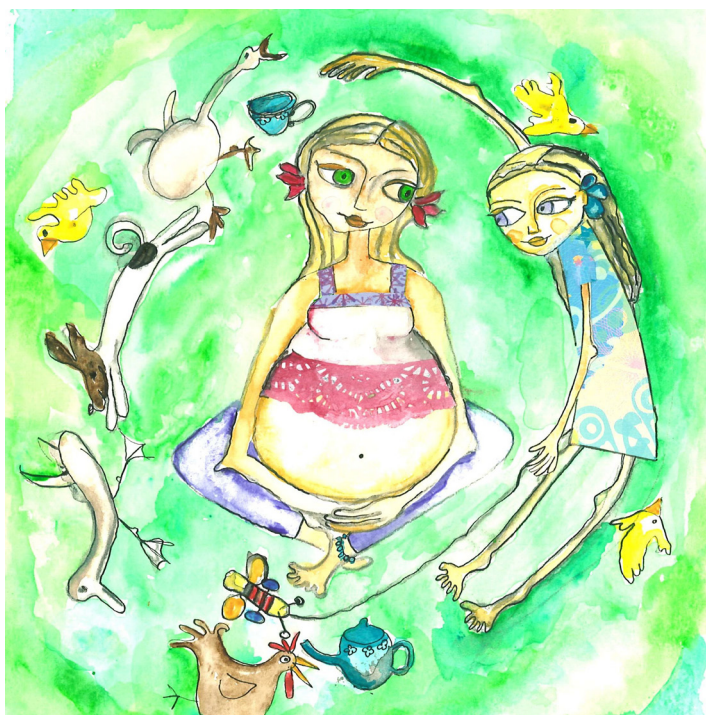


*Give what you can...
and make the world
a better place*



Monica Batiste is a
Yoga teacher, author,
artist and mother
of two beautiful daughters.

To learn more about Monica please visit
www.monicabatiste.com.au



Becoming A Mother, A Creative journey

By Chrissy Butler

I became a mother 10 years ago, which was the beginning of the most wonderful creative project of my life and unlocked parts of myself I have been enjoying since.

Painting while mothering at first was quite a challenge, I began painting again when my daughter turned one, working in acrylic and showing at cafes and restaurants. I had bursts of activity and then needed to gather myself again.

For me mothering is a very spiritual journey in which letting go and trusting have been my recurring lessons. I entered motherhood with an emergency C-section after a planned homebirth, it was quite a bang. In the following months I suffered from PND experiencing panic attacks, anxiety, insomnia and a lot of tears. It was a wild ride of self-discovery, growth and deep connections within my family.

Gathering knowledge and courage I began to follow my intuition and go 'with' my baby. For me this meant going against the grain and finding little support for my wild ways. (I raised some eyebrows breast feeding my 2 1/2 year old when I was 8 months pregnant!) I have always followed

my heart and trusted my children despite at times feeling lonely and isolated. Learning along the way to surrender and soften, to tune in and listen to each child's rhythm.

My second child was born beautifully at home, I found this both healing and empowering. I had to embrace my fears and let go before Jimi Jazz joined us (well into my 42nd week). Labouring alone and by candlelight I was able to lose myself to the rhythms of my birthing song.

Mothering is such inspiration and food for my soul and through this I have fallen in love with reading children's books. Holding the pudgy soft hands of my children, arms around the neck of my man we plunge into the wondrous world of imagination.

We marvel at the artwork, lose ourselves in the plot, learn new ways of seeing and become a family.

When planning for our home birth we read a couple of wonderful books for children about birthing at home, they were few and difficult to come by, so gathering my inspiration around me I embarked on the bold Jimi Jazz journey. After our beautiful home-birth I felt deeply inspired to write and illustrate My Brother Jimi Jazz.

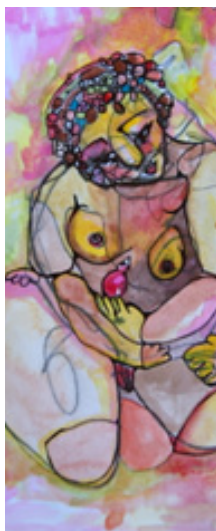
I love everything that motherhood brings; vulnerability, courage, strength, compassion, inspiration, it is truly a wonderful gift, a divine dance.

Now I am the blessed Mamma of two beautiful children: Trinity and Jimi Jazz

Chrissy Butler is an artist, children's book author and unschooling Mama of 2.

For more information or to purchase books, cards, blessingway invitations or fine art prints visit her website at www.chrissybutler.com





Loving and Caring for Self

by Arna Baartz

The way you care for yourself as an adult is connected to how you were **CARED FOR** as a child. Another contributing factor to self-esteem is what we **WITNESSED** as a child; how did your parents care for themselves? They looked after you but did they look after themselves?

A child who grows up with parents who care for themselves and is cared for, is in the optimal position for a lifetime of great self-esteem.

A child with parents/caregivers that are self-aware and resilient will find it easier to cope with the changes that life brings. This includes making smoother transitions from parent-care to teacher-care at the beginning of their school career.

As parents and educators we have an obligation to learn to love ourselves, to deepen our connection and commitment to living our best life thus ensuring that our children also feel connected and loved.

If you experienced a caring environment, chances are you take care of yourself. If you didn't, you may neglect some of your needs without even realising it. If you have habits of neglect for yourself, no matter how much you love your children and how hard you try, you may be unintentionally reflecting a lack of self-care behaviour.

Here are a couple of simple pointers and techniques to help you discover how much you actually like yourself, how to adjust your perspective and give your children a stronger foundation of self-esteem:

- On waking in the morning take deep breaths, slowly and softly
- Make an intention, a strong heartfelt statement to yourself, along the lines of 'today I will do what I can to truly love myself more'
- Before you have coffee or tea, slowly sip a glass of fresh water, acknowledging your body's needs and bringing your awareness to the miracle of your bodily functions.

- Remember to breathe deeply whenever the thought arises
- Be aware of the thoughts that travel through your mind, don't try to change them as yet, but do notice them. These are the thoughts that are creating the emotions and the stress levels in your body.
- You may be surprised at how nasty or self-defeating some of these thoughts can be. Once again it is not the time to change these thoughts but simply to acknowledge and accept.
- Feelings may arise as you discover this 'programming' and that's okay. Simply feel the feelings with the intention to do what you can to start to love yourself more and more every day.
- With strong intentions, gentle acknowledgement and acceptance of yourself; the natural evolution of the human mind is to heal and change. You may notice as you continue your journey of self-awareness that you will begin to see more synchronicities in your day to day life. This is a sign that you are working toward truly loving yourself, your mind has accepted your intention and is responding by alerting you to healing opportunities in the form of books, things people say, television moments etc.

The decision to grow self-esteem and open your heart to yourself is an exciting and important step to take, not only for the benefits you will see in your own life but for the lives of the little ones you have pledged to nurture.

To look at it simply there are four major areas of self-care are mental, emotional, physical and spiritual health, they are intertwined and you can start at any area and at any time, it is never too late. Make an intention to do something from each area every day, until you begin to feel your self-esteem and self-care rising. This may take a little while but if you deliberately and consistently change your patterns of thought you **WILL** develop more positive neural networks in your brain so don't give up, you are worth it!

**When you're FEELING HAPPY
you know you're on track.**

Musical Intelligence



Martha Baartz and Talented student
from Sathya Sai School

by Arna Baartz

I was in the car with my children the other day and realised we had left Wonky Donkey at home, OH NO! I flicked through the radio hoping to find something entertaining and happened upon the classic ‘Peter and the Wolf’ - In 1936 Sergei Prokofiev was commissioned to write a new musical symphony for children. The intent was to cultivate “musical tastes in children from the first years of school”.

MY KIDS LOVED IT!

It made me think, what if I took a beautiful piece of classical music, say a sonata from BACH for example:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=44iC6U8I6xY

...and asked my children to narrate it? I was fascinated to experiment with this and find out how they experienced a classical piece of music, what could they hear?

So the next trip we DID IT. I was rewarded with the most beautiful narration of a sad, baby black bird trying to find its mummy... and the story went on!

Developing an interest in music activates centres in the brain that are essential to whole child development, for example, rhythm, reflection, interpretation. If we ask children to interact with music they will establish connections that stem into other areas of their learning.

Start with where they feel the music in their body and what images it come into their imagination as they listen.

OH and of course, enjoy!





Daisy Speaks

Q | What would make education better for kids?

By Daisy larkin

Daisy's Answer

I think that kids should be given more choices at school and it shouldn't matter what we wear or how we wear it. Also, we shouldn't have to stay up late and study and the teachers shouldn't put us on detention for not finishing homework. I know for some kids it is really difficult and that for some kids they are having trouble at home and to put kids on detention and on cards for not doing homework is silly! If 6hrs is the amount of time that school goes for, then leave it like that!

Teachers need to make work fun! I don't think I have EVER heard anyone say that going to class is fun and there is a reason for that. WE should get together and sort some stuff out. We like stories and connection and teachers being real. The truth is we don't want to sit down and write notes and we don't want to listen to a teacher talk for 1 hour

about distillation. I know that teachers don't have a choice on what they teach but they do have a choice on how they teach it!

We are going to lead the next generation so if you want a Group of people thirty going on 13 in your future then keep doing what your doing. But if you want a civilised world where we live sustainably, where colour shouldn't matter and where it makes no difference if you are gay, straight, lesbian, bi (HUMAN) then you have to change the way you teach us now because I know that it will take a long time for everyone to realise this!

So if you start acting NOW than there will be a large group of adults in 10 yrs who will be willing and able to make a change to our world!!!

**Daisy is a 13 yr old student
with a creative soul
and an extraordinary mind.**

**"I know that teachers don't have a choice on what they teach
but they do have a choice on how they teach it!"**

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PAYING IT FORWARD IN THE PHARMACY

I am a big fan of Random Acts of Kindness and try to practice them as often as I can. For almost a year, I have been carrying around a list of ideas and projects to try and bring a little joy and happiness to my community. Then yesterday, I saw that the most inspiring moments of hope cannot be planned. They just happen when you need them most.

For the last several months I have been studying for the bar exam. This means I spend day after day alone in my apartment studying. Yesterday, I made a quick trip to the pharmacy to pick up some supplies. I wasn't in a particularly pleasant mood and just wanted to pay for my items, get home, and get back to work as quickly as possible. In front of me was a man buying a box of antacids and in front of him was an elderly woman struggling with several bags of purchases. He set down his box and asked if he could help her. She was shocked and thanked him profusely, but he just laughed and smiled, "Of course! I'm a strong young man, I couldn't live with myself if I didn't help you."

I decided that one good turn deserves another. While he was helping her carry her items to the car, I quietly purchased his antacids for him and left quickly (I

really don't like to be thanked when I do nice things, it makes me feel awkward). But even today, I'm still smiling thinking about that nice guy who helped an elderly woman without being asked and I'm grateful I had the opportunity to do something nice for him.

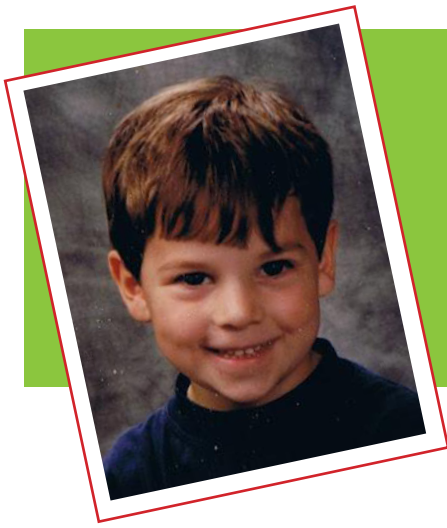
From the The Random Acts of Kindness
Foundation website.

www.rippleeffects.com.au

"Sail beyond the horizon; fly higher than you ever thought possible; magnify your existence by helping others; be kind to people and animals of all shapes and sizes; be true to what you value most; shine your light on the world; and be the person you were born to be." ~ Blake Beattie

www.ripplekindness.org





SWIRLING VIBRATING WORDS

Melanie Jean Juneau



It was quite by accident we discovered our 11 yr old son couldn't read...

I was gathering books to return to friends one day when the book Reading by Colors by Carol Irlen caught my eye. As I was skimming through it, 11 year-old Anthony looked over my shoulder and said in a surprised voice,

"Gee, those words look nice."

I turned to him and said,
"What do you mean NICE?"

Anthony explained, "The words are flat with the page and they're not moving."

I sputtered, "What do you mean not moving?"

"The words
are flat with the
page and they're
not moving."

Anthony shrugged his shoulders and said, "You know, the letters aren't shaking and they're not high off the page."

I shook my head, "No, I don't know what you mean." This particular page was grey with blue letters. I quickly turned the page to a white one with black letters. Anthony wrinkled his forehead and described what he saw when he looked at the printed page.

Everything clicked into place as I did research into Irlen Syndrome or SSS (Scotopic Sensitivity Syndrome); I realized that Anthony had every symptom.



SSS is a learning disability that causes difficulties with reading as well as encoding and decoding verbal information. Unbelievably many eye specialists refuse to acknowledge Irlen syndrome, probably because a normal educator, teaching illiterate adults in California discovered the problem and the solution, not a scientist.

We struggled for years to teach our intelligent son how to read. It was sheer agony. Anthony couldn't sit still, he'd lose his place, forget what he had read 30 seconds after he had read it. After ten minutes of struggling, he would start rubbing his forehead, complain that his head hurt and he felt sick. This kid had perfect eyesight, was smart as a whip, especially in Math but he could barely read.

No one in the school system knew anything about this handicap. I finally found a private screener in Ottawa, Adel Francis. She discovered that Anthony had not one but five different distortions, each one corrected with a different coloured lens. Within two hours of testing, after Adele had pointed out a few complicated words, Anthony read smoothly and flawlessly at a grade NINE level. We came to tears because we had pushed and badgered our son for years, when he just couldn't see the way most other people do.

We were appalled to learn that 11% to 13% of people have SSS. So much potential wasted, so many people frustrated, unfilled, feeling dumb with many ending up in jail.

Everything changed rapidly once Anthony started to wear his miracle lenses. The first night we read together after he started wearing his dark blue, grey glasses, Anthony moved the page close to his face and then back again. He then turned to me with a puzzled look on his face and asked, "Getting has two ts in it??!"

One night after supper, when the younger children had left the table to play, my oldest daughter laughed and said,

"Hey, I just realized that we don't have to send Anthony away if we want to discuss an adult topic; we'll just take off his glass!" We all laughed of course.

Then there was the time a friend tried to cut Anthony's hair. He couldn't seem to stop squirming. One of my daughter's, Rachel, suggested, "Why don't you try putting on his glasses?"

Anthony put them on and he sat as still as a stone statue.

"Oh my god, I don't believe it," my friend yelled, "Everyone. Come see this. Okay, Anthony, take your glasses off and then put them on when I tell you."

The difference was so dramatic and everyone's reaction was so funny that even Anthony started to laugh.



Bio

My husband and I have raised nine children on a hobby farm and discovered fulfilment and purpose. Slowly I began to realize that my call, my vocation and my witness to the world was the joy of mothering. I write articles and short stories that are humorous, and heart-warming / thoughtful and thought provoking.

<http://themothernine9.wordpress.com/>

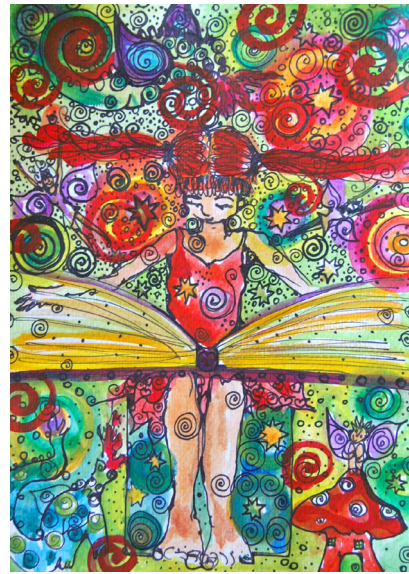


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-  Invite wellbeing into the heart and home
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Contact Arna

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One size fits all

Fitting into the school system with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder)

When I was at school, kids like Sam were labelled 'loners', intelligent but socially awkward. I witnessed my brother at school in the '80s being bullied for not fitting in, as he too was a 'loner'.

Now these kids have a new label 'ASD', Autism Spectrum Disorder. Sam was officially diagnosed at 9 years of age with 'High functioning Autism,' he is not hyperactive, infact he is the opposite, a logical thinker that internalises his emotions.

'Serious' Sam didn't smile as a baby. As a toddler he spent hours lining up his cars, throwing major tantrums in supermarkets due to sensory issues, his words all started with 'd' and his vocabulary was limited to 'dink' and 'dat', not to mention his quirks.

His brother Ben came along 18 months later, twelve weeks early, (*but that's another story*), as Sam was my first I soon realised that even though Ben was premie, he didn't have the same issues or quirks that Sam had.

...acknowledge his angry emotions, he just wanted to be heard and understood

I made the effort to go to playgroups to help him socialize, on several occasions I came away in tears as Sam thumped or threw sand at another toddler, as other mothers scowled at me. One day I sat with him and realised he was just frustrated with the other kids taking away his spade or toy, his natural response was anger, so I taught him another way of responding. I learnt through the Positive Parenting program to acknowledge his

angry emotions, he just wanted to be heard and understood, then offer another toy or find another toy for himself.

Sam could not speak coherently for his first 4 years, his speech delay caused so much frustration for him, he didn't speak our language, if you have ever visited a foreign speaking country, you can get a small window into his world at the age of 4 years. So I took Sam to a specialist, he recommended speech therapy.

At 5 years of age he could finally say his name, his speech therapist gave him tasks to teach him how to pronounce his letters. We practised the tasks set every day for half an hour, with Xbox time as the reward. For the next 2 years, we taught Sam how to construct sentences in the right sequence. Two years of preschool gave him a year of social maturity to enter his first year of school.

As a graphic designer, I used my skills to create visual charts with cartoon characters and photos to help Sam with his morning and evening routines.

At 9 years of age, his teacher suggested he had Aspergers, she wrote a report about his difficulties in class, along with my write-up about his many quirks as a toddler, we finally got an official diagnoses of ASD, enabling him to get a support teacher.

I still ask myself if I should have had Sam diagnosed, but when I ask him, he reassures me, it has helped him fit in to a 'one size fits all' school system, with less frustration and resentment.

His diagnosis allows him to complete homework at school and choose one elective, allowing him time with a support teacher to complete his assignments. He is allowed to have extra time for exams, as he has the intelligence, but sometimes a slower processor.

At the moment the school system is setup to 'herd' large groups of kids to learn what they need to know to enter the workforce. But of course they are all individuals, there are fantastic teachers that teach

with this in mind, but getting them is like 'Russian Roulette'. Sam excels with the right teacher, his maths teacher this year connects with him and is approachable, but he shuts down with the wrong teacher.

Recently I sent a 'Thank You' card to his Math's teacher for helping Sam believe in himself. Her response was "Thank you...It is rare as a teacher to receive positive feedback, it was a nice little boost today. I am glad that Sam is enjoying maths and hopefully over the year I can get his mark to reflect his ability." It is so good to have teachers on the same side who understand and see his potential. When Sam comes home from school feeling good about himself and his day, it's as good as getting an A+.

If today's kids are to have respect in 'Authority' then we need more people in those positions to develop their emotional intelligence, to connect with kids and teenagers, to hear and see them.

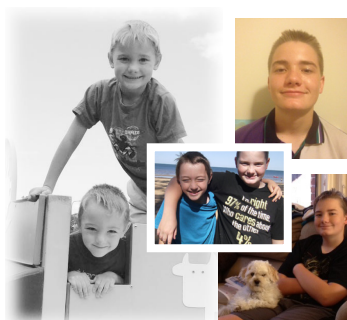
**...defending some social
behaviour and
school systems that are
in place...his logical
reasoning makes more sense**

I often question whether I am just 'training' him to conform, as he goes through teenagehood? I find

myself wondering why I am defending some social and school systems that are in place, as his logical reasoning makes more sense.

I am very proud of the way Sam, now 14 years and 6ft tall, understands and has the skills to work out his own challenges with a kind and logical manner.

As we transition together into teenagehood, I am letting go of the need to be a lioness protecting her cub and standing back to enjoy Sam's independence.



Thank you to both of my sons Sam, for his 'live in the moment' logical approach to life and Ben as a creative and emotionally connected teen who teaches me to accept my authentic self.



by Jane Hayes-Watt



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